

THE FORGOTTEN ART OF FLOATING
MARTIN FINNIN

MARTIN FINNIN
A POROUS AFTERNOON
BY SUE HUBBARD

Martin Finnin never considered that he had the finesse to be a painter; he thought of himself more as a rag and bone man using whatever materials came to hand: monster munchies, fungus and even concrete. After drawing for a while on large sheets of paper he progressed to painting in his twenties. His development as an abstract painter and sensitive colourist has been a slow, hard slog. Abstraction is how he makes sense of reality. His colours and biomorphic forms are in constant dialogue, resonating one against the other to create relationships akin to numbers in an elegant equation or a musical chord. The worlds he creates are how he imagines physics, whilst his canvas acts as a stage where shapes, marks and colours all have their walk on parts which, somehow, combine to form an intuitive physical drama. In the past small, child-like figures have appeared in his paintings of their own accord; figures on horseback or in boats. But mostly he hasn't seen them in years, though of late they have been making a tentative comeback.

He is a very slow painter. Much of the time is simply spent looking. Form and colour are the hallmarks of his paintings. He builds them layer upon layer, letting things slip past the 'sentry of his conscious mind'. After applying thin washes of oil he turns his paintings to face the wall to dry for weeks whilst he continues to work on more developed pieces. He then turns them around and applies more paint, which he maybe wipes off again. This can go on for months. He usually works on about fifteen pieces at a time. Some are in the process of being started, others finished. Lately he has been working with oil on canvas but he has also used egg tempera, watercolour and acrylics. He also makes his own oils and water-based paint in order to include variations in colour.

His influences are various; from the natural world to the tall cranes passed everyday in the docks and circles inspired by cans of tuna found in the kitchen cupboard. He does not think of himself as an Irish painter. In terms of painting he feels that Ireland is still 'a baby' and that modern Irish painting only began sixty years ago with Yeats. All his influences have been foreign: Rembrandt, whom he considers a master, through to Turner, Picasso, Giacometti and Brancusi and the likes of Williem de Kooning and Jean Michel Basquit. If anything, he sees himself as a European painter.

Though not preconceived the concept of floating seems to have attached itself to this recent body of work as it grew over the past months. There is a sense, as in Porous Afternoon, of peering into the clear water of a rock pool to discover stings of floating seaweed or, in The Edge Replies, of standing, perhaps, on the west coast of Kerry looking out at the far islands wreathed in veils of mist. These are not literal meanings, of course, but part of the metaphorical possibilities suggested by the layers of potent colour and organic forms in Martin Finnin's poetic and life affirming works.

Sue Hubbard is an award-winning poet, a fiction writer and freelance art critic. Her recent books have included The Idea of Islands, (Occasional Press) poems with drawings by Donald Teskey conceived in Cill Rialaig on the west coast of Ireland where she met Martin Finnin, and Adventures in Art: selected writings 1990-2010 (Other Criteria).
www.suehubbard.com





THE FORGOTTEN ART OF FLOATING
OIL ON CANVAS 100 X 180 CM







MY LIFE AS A LETTUCE LABELLER
OIL ON CANVAS 30.5 X 70 CM



MOLTEN LIGHTHOUSE
OIL ON PAPER 34 X 26 CM



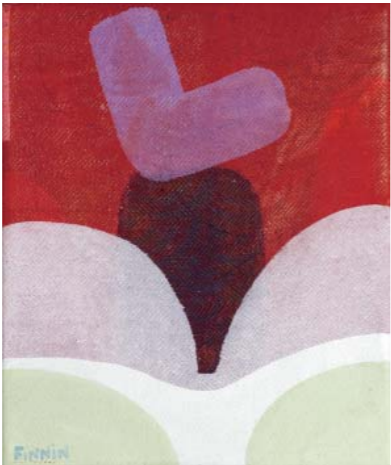


FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

THE MAKING OF PET EIGHTS I
OIL ON CANVAS 30.5 X 25.5 CM

THE MAKING OF PET EIGHTS II
OIL ON CANVAS 30.5 X 25.5 CM

THE MAKING OF PET EIGHTS III
OIL ON CANVAS 30.5 X 25.5 CM

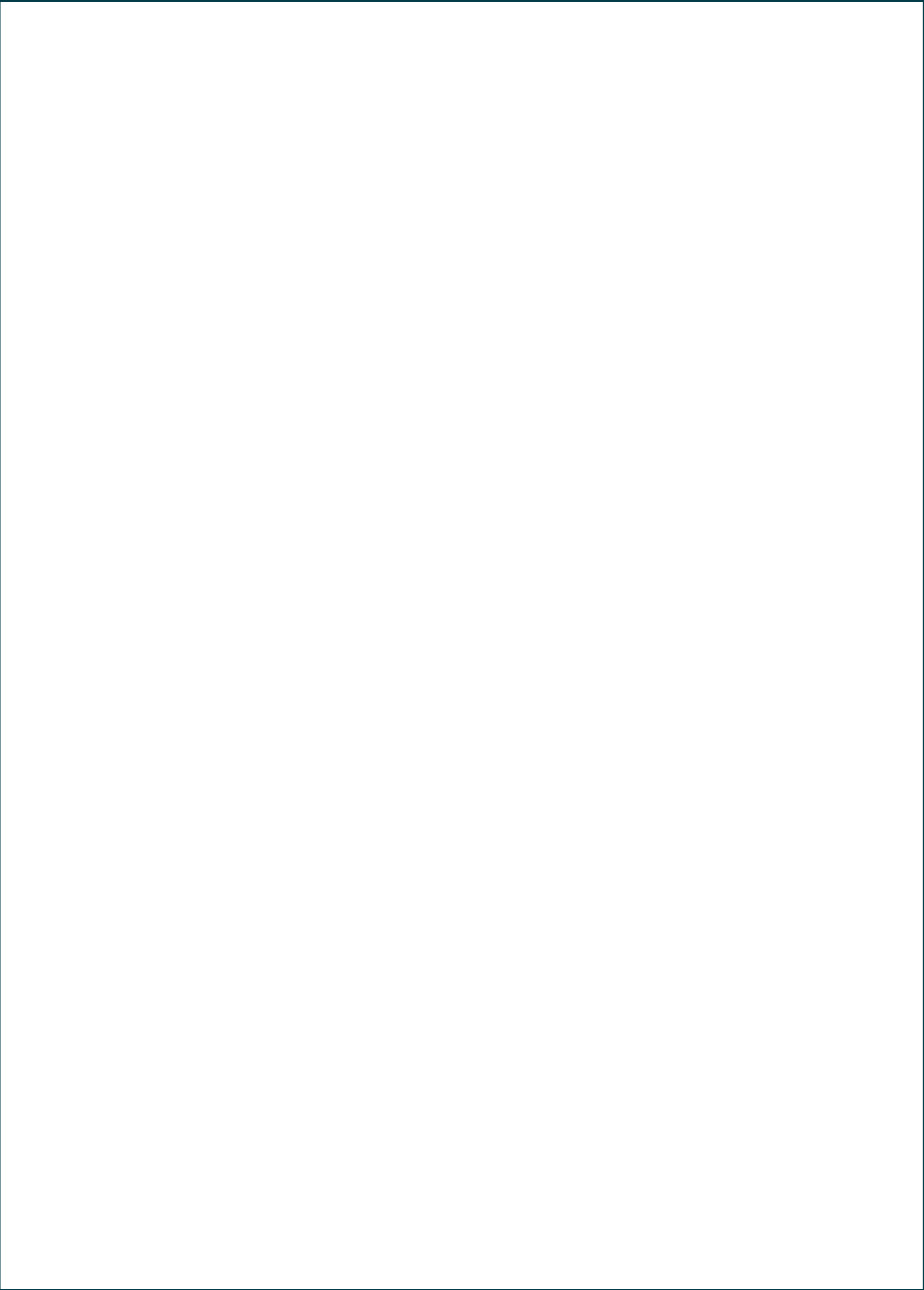


MELLOW MARSH
OIL ON CANVAS 27 X 32 CM





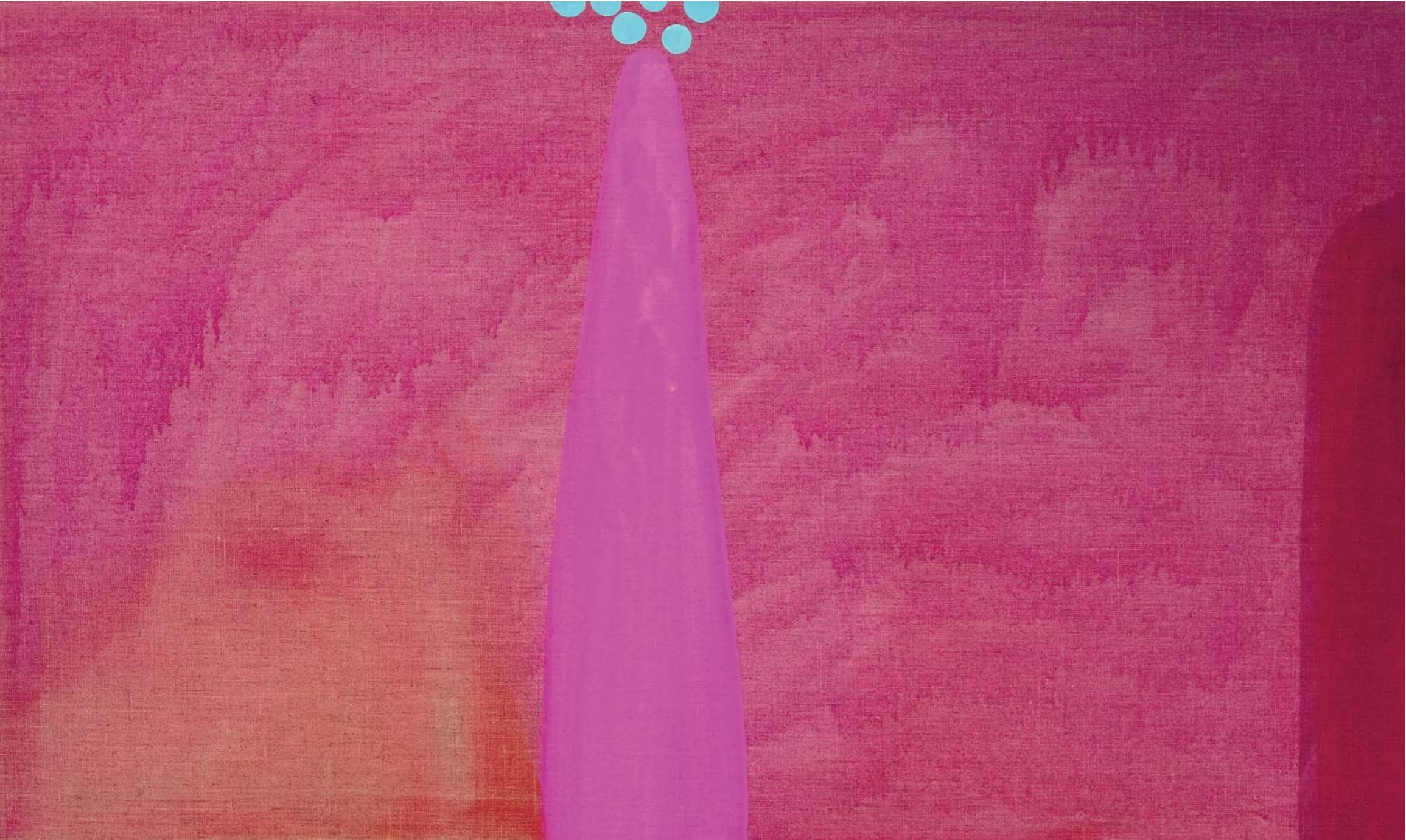
WOMAN BATHING (AFTER REMBRANDT)
OIL ON CANVAS 215 X 155 CM







THE OTHER ONE NEVER CAME
OIL ON CANVAS 60 X 100 CM



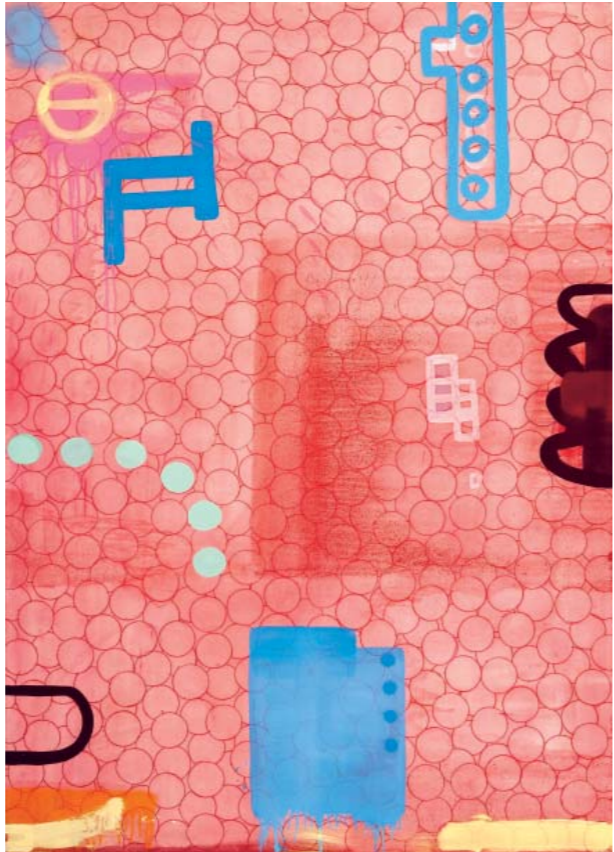
FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

TUNA TIN TRILOGY I
OIL ON CANVAS 215 X 155 CM

TUNA TIN TRILOGY II
OIL ON CANVAS 215 X 155 CM

TUNA TIN TRILOGY III
OIL ON CANVAS 215 X 155 CM







THE EDGE REPLIES
OIL ON PAPER 61 X 82 CM

THE BIKINI OR THE BURKA
OIL ON PAPER 61 X 82 CM







ASLEEP IN TRAP 6
OIL ON CANVAS 60 X 100 CM

THE MARCH OF THE HONEY TROOPS
OIL ON CANVAS 80 X 120 CM





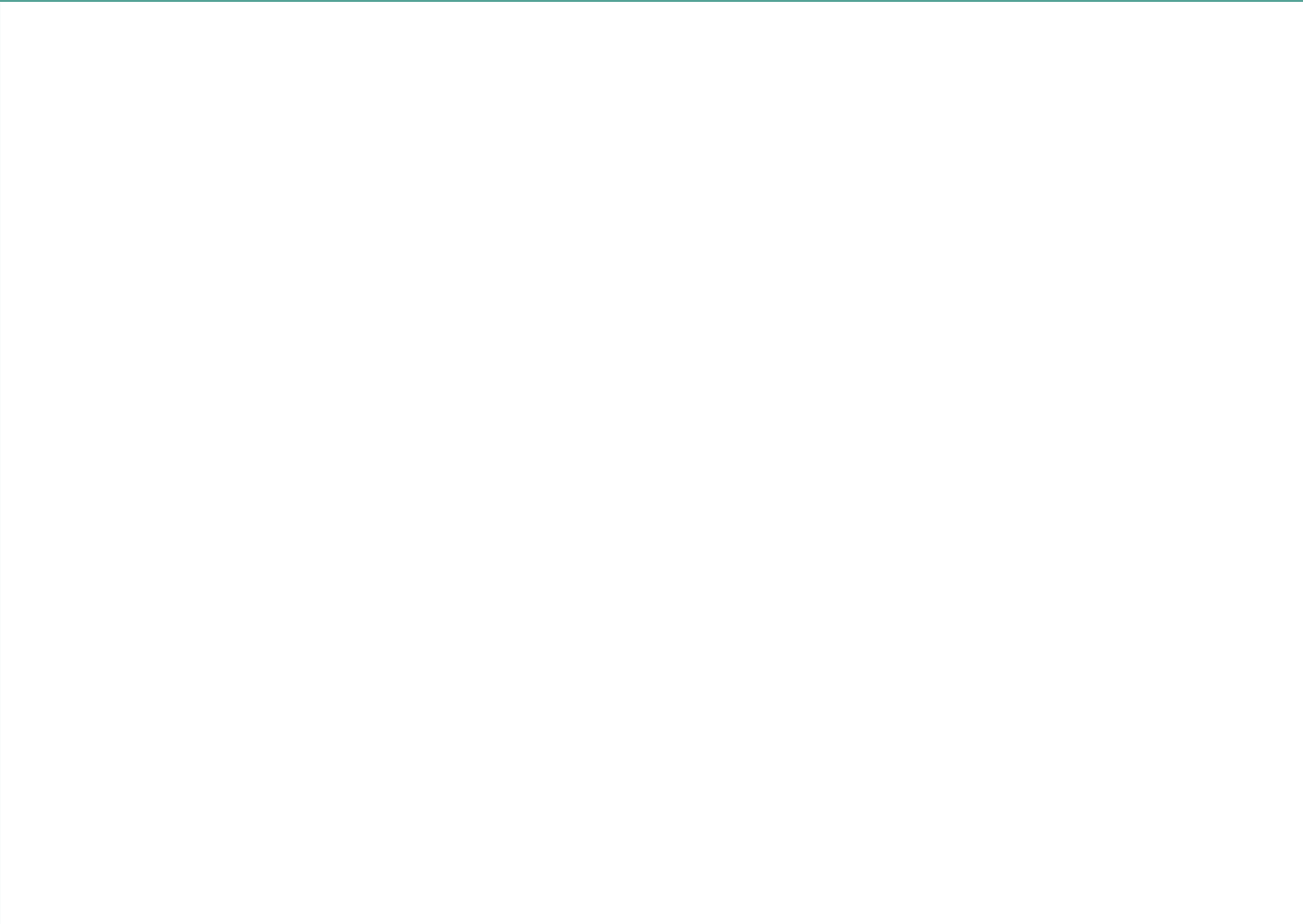


SNEAKING PAST THE SENTRY OF CONSCIOUS THOUGHT I
OIL ON BOARD 26 X 26 CM



SNEAKING PAST THE SENTRY OF CONSCIOUS THOUGHT II
OIL ON BOARD 26 X 26 CM





WET WONDER WAITING
OIL ON PAPER 61 X 82 CM

SINGLE MOST LIKELY TIME TO LIVE
OIL ON CANVAS 110 X 160 CM





MARTIN FINNIN

B. 1968 LIMERICK, IRELAND

1987-8 LIMERICK SCHOOL OF ART & DESIGN

NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN, DUBLIN

LIVES AND WORKS IN CORK

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 The Forgotten Art of Floating, Corn Exchange Gallery, Edinburgh
- 2010 49 Ox Hides and a Lump of Faith, John Martin Gallery, London
- 2009 The Moon and the Modern World, Origin Gallery, Dublin
- 2008 Turn the Lemon Page, Cill Rialaig Arts Centre, Ballinskelligs, Kerry
- 2007 A snippet from the seventh soup, Vanguard Gallery, Cork
- 2006 The world is blue like an orange, New Urban Retreat Gallery, Dublin
Stepping out of the stream of time, Printmakers Gallery, Limerick
Life beyond the hedge, Cill Rialaig Art Centre, Ballinskelligs, Kerry
- 2005 A miracle outside the window, Form Gallery, London
The Marching Hugs, Origin Gallery, Dublin
Meanwhile...in a foreign land, Vanguard Gallery, Cork
- 2003 The origins of optimism, Printmakers Gallery, Limerick
Songs of a recluse, Vanguard Gallery, Cork
In Fall, Ashford Gallery, Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin;
Printmakers Gallery, Limerick
- 2002 Vermont Studio Gallery, Vermont
- 2001 A subtle consolation of existence, Vanguard Gallery, Cork
The Big Picture, Printmakers Gallery, Limerick
- 1997 Forest of Banquets, Tig Filí Gallery, Cork
- 1996 Spionza, Blackcombe Gallery, Cork
Triskel Art Centre, Cork
- 1995 Ivory Tower Restaurant, Cork
Jo Rain Gallery, Dublin
- 1994 Art Hive, Cork
- 1993 Blackcombe Gallery, Cork
Lost Boys Coffee Shop, Harlem, Holland
- 1991 Everyman Palace, Cork
- 1989 Iveagh Markets, Dublin
- 1988 La Galleria Lucierna, San Miguel de Allende, Mexico

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2009 Jack Donovan & Martin Finnin, Printmakers Gallery, Limerick
- 2008 Artists' Choice, John Martin Gallery, London
- 2005 Cill Rialaig Arts Centre, Ballinskelligs, Kerry
Tribute to Beckett, Vanguard Gallery, Cork
- 2004-5 The People's Gallery, Cork
- 2002 Myth and Magic, Lavit Gallery, Cork
- 2001 RHA Annual Exhibition, RHA Gallagher
Íontas 2001, Sligo Art Gallery; Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast
Crawford Art Gallery, Cork
- 2000 Tom Climent, Martin Finnin, Brian Smyth, Lavit Gallery, Cork
- 1997 Sense of Cork, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork

AWARDS AND RESIDENCIES

- 2011 Culture Ireland Award
- 2009 Dedaldo Art Competition, Tuscany
- 2008 Cill Rialaig Art Centre, Ballinskelligs, Kerry
(artist's residency; also 2005, 2006)
- 2002 Dedaldo Art Competition, Tuscany
(also 2005, 2006; 1st prize, 2004)
- 2001 Vermont Studio Center, USA (painting scholarship)
Department of Foreign Affairs (Cultural Relations Committee Award)
Vermont Studio Center, USA (fellowship award)
- 1998 Nominated by Crawford Art Gallery for Glen Dimplex Awards
Sense of Cork, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork (prizewinner)
- 1994 An Chomhairle Ealaíon / The Arts Council bursaries
(studio rental, 1995, 2001; materials grant, 1997, 2001; Artflight, 1996)

COLLECTIONS

- Crawford Art Gallery, Cork;
- Cork Opera House;
- Department of Foreign Affairs;
- The Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin;
- Office of Public Works;
- AIB Bank;
- Spazio Tiempo Gallery, Florence;
- University College Cork;
- Vermont Studio Centre, USA;
- Private collections in Ireland, England,
Holland, Italy, Lithuania, Australia,
Canada, Mexico and the US.

THANKS TO

MAIN SPONSOR



promoting Irish arts worldwide
cur chun cinn ealaíona na hÉireann ar fud na cruinne

DESIGN

NAVYBLUE

www.navyblue.com

PRINT

CALEDONIAN COLOUR PRINTERS

www.caledoniancp.co.uk

PAPER

HOWARD SMITH PAPER GROUP

www.hspg.com/hsp